



## Office of City Auditor Memorandum

**Date:** September 30, 2003

**To:** John Franklin, Director, Department of Fleets and Facilities  
David Kerrigan, Fleet Administrator, Department of Fleet

**From:** Scottie Nix, Assistant City Auditor for Internal Controls *Scottie Nix*

**Subject:** Review of Fleets Vehicle Use Log for SPD K-9 Units

David Kerrigan asked the Office of City Auditor to review and respond to a request made by the Seattle Police Department's (SPD) K-9 unit to change the method they use to document their use of City overnight vehicles. Rather than using the standard City of Seattle Department of Administrative Services Vehicle Log (i.e., Form 2575 revised 1/85, commonly referred to as the "vehicle use log"), which must be submitted each day of vehicle use, SPD wants to provide a list of assigned Canine Officers and their hours as of January 31 of each year to the Fleets and Facilities Department (FFD).

An SPD official stated that police officers assigned to the SPD K-9 unit are using the assigned overnight vehicles due to their need to transport a canine partner. The SPD representative believed it was redundant to have each K-9 officer complete a vehicle use log each day they work because it is obvious that because they are assigned to the K-9 unit they'll be using an overnight vehicle.

We believe that it would be acceptable for FFD to grant an exception to the SPD K-9 unit and allow them to substitute a list of assigned Canine Officers and their hours as of January 31 of each year for the vehicle use log. We reached this conclusion after reviewing Seattle Municipal Code section 3.18.140, Council Resolution 30606, a completed sample of a vehicle use log, and a 1999 Office of City Auditor report on overnight vehicles. We also spoke with David Kerrigan to obtain his perspective on the request.

According to the information we received, the vehicle use logs are submitted to document that the SPD K-9 officers have been assigned overnight vehicles; they serve no other control purpose. That is, FFD and SPD do not use the logs to, for example, monitor the daily use or mileage of the vehicle assigned to the K-9 unit. As long as the departments have other means of ensuring that the vehicles in question are being used for authorized City purposes, we do not believe that it is necessary for the SPD K-9 unit to continue to submit vehicle use logs to FFD. We did not verify whether the SPD K-9 unit or FFD has procedures to ensure that the overnight vehicles are being used in accordance with City requirements.

SPD may want to consider obtaining a signed statement from each K-9 officer assigned an overnight vehicle certifying that they understand the policies and procedures related to having an assigned vehicle and agree to use the vehicle only for City business.

Please feel free to contact me (206-233-1094) if you have any questions about this issue.

SN/tb

cc: Jan Drago, Chair, City Council Finance, Budget, Business and Labor Committee  
Susan Cohen, City Auditor  
Ruth Riddle, State Auditor's Office  
Valarie Anderson, Fiscal Director, SPD  
Aaron Bert, Department of Finance